



NAVY MEDICINE SUPPORTS THE H1N1/SEASONAL FLU CAMPAIGN

"Vaccinations are one of the best ways to put an end to spread of infectious diseases. The health and well-being of the Navy's Total Force and our beneficiaries is one of our top priorities. The best way to help keep our personnel and their families healthy and ready is to ensure we are prepared to provide our total force with the seasonal flu immunization in a timely fashion as it is the primary method of reducing seasonal flu illness."

Vice Admiral Adam M. Robinson Jr., MC Surgeon General of the Navy

BACKGROUND:

Influenza is not the common cold; it can be a severe to life-threatening disease that annually results in more than 30,000 U.S. deaths. Immunization remains the primary method of reducing seasonal flu illness and its complications. Getting an annual flu vaccine immunization (either the traditional shot in the arm or the inhaled nasal spray vaccine) protects people from getting the disease or becoming severely ill. The seasonal flu vaccine not only helps protect vaccinated individuals, but also helps protect entire communities by preventing and reducing the spread of the disease.

DoD POLICY:

It is current DoD policy that annual seasonal flu vaccinations are mandatory for all active duty military personnel and Selected Reserves unless medically or administratively exempt. Navy Medicine's seasonal flu vaccine immunization program is designed to protect Sailors and Marines, mission-essential healthcare personnel, and beneficiaries. A major part of this effort emphasizes the importance of vaccinating health care workers involved in direct patient care. Minimizing the transmission of infections between healthcare personnel and patients is a major part of this effort. It is important to vaccinate health care workers involved in direct patient care in the fall, excluding those medically or religiously exempt. Additional information on the military vaccine program can be found at <http://www.vaccines.mil/>.

The DoD and Department of the Navy (DoN) goal is to achieve 90 percent immunization compliance by November 31, 2010 and 100 percent immunization compliance by December 31, 2010. Navy Medicine facilities have already ordered the seasonal flu vaccine, and will begin administering the vaccine by mid to late September.

Navy Medicine will be monitoring the seasonal flu viruses carefully over the coming weeks and months and will be proactive in developing contingency plans to address any public health issues if required. Force health protection is the responsibility of every commander and service member and it is important for all of us to take the proper actions to protect personnel, beneficiaries, coworkers and family members against the seasonal flu.

KEY TALKING POINTS:

- **Immunization is the primary method of reducing seasonal flu illness.**
 - It is DoD's policy that annual seasonal flu vaccinations are required for all active duty military personnel, Selected Reserves and healthcare workers.
 - This year the novel H1N1 flu vaccine has been combined with the seasonal flu vaccine so only one shot is needed
 - The vaccine will be available to family members who want it.
 - Seasonal flu mist vaccinations are expected to begin arriving at MTFs in early September. Injectable flu vaccines are expected to begin arriving at MTFs in late September based on delivery from the supplier.
 - We expect to have enough seasonal flu vaccine for all Active Duty personnel.
 - DoD civilians and beneficiaries should consult their primary care provider for alternate sites to be vaccinated.
 - Only trust information and supplies from trusted sources and never order a vaccine over the internet.
- **Personal preventative measures can limit the effects of the flu**
 - Cover your mouth when you cough. Covering your mouth with a tissue is best in order to limit the spread of germs.
 - Wash your hands often; avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
 - If possible, stay home from work, school and errands when you are sick.
- **The health and well-being of all the Navy's Total Force and beneficiaries is one of our highest priorities**
 - Information can be found at https://www.cnmc.navy.mil/CNIC_HQ_Site/OpPrepare/xxxxx starting 15 Sept
 - General information on seasonal flu and H1N1 can be found at <http://cdc.gov/flu/> and <http://cdc.gov/h1n1flu/>
- **The Navy is coordinating with DoD, other federal agencies and local and state governments as required.**